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Making the Movement Matter: Conceptualizing Social Movement Success and its Relation to Participation

Abstract

In light of ongoing demonstrations meant to address police brutality and racism, the #BlackLivesMatter movement is becoming increasingly important. Through a survey and interviews of the Lake Forest College community, I discern variables that influence levels of participation in #BlackLivesMatter. My research extends existing social movement mobilization theories to examine what I believe to be an extra step in the individual's decision to join or avoid a social movement: the individual's perception of a social movement's current or future success. My research examines whether perceptions of a movement's success increase the likelihood of participation.

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Printed Name: Cassandra L. Balzer

Thesis Title: Making the Movement Matter: Conceptualizing Social Movement Success and its Relation to Participation

LAKE FOREST COLLEGE

Senior Thesis

Making the Movement Matter:
Conceptualizing Social Movement Success and its Relation to Participation

by

Cassandra L. Balzer

April 14, 2016

The report of the investigation undertaken as a
Senior Thesis, to carry two courses of credit in
the Department of Sociology and Anthropology

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Abstract

In light of ongoing demonstrations meant to address police brutality and racism, the #BlackLivesMatter movement is becoming increasingly important. Through a survey and interviews of the Lake Forest College community, I discern variables that influence levels of participation in #BlackLivesMatter. My research extends existing social movement mobilization theories to examine what I believe to be an extra step in the individual's decision to join or avoid a social movement: the individual's perception of a social movement's current or future success. My research examines whether perceptions of a movement's success increase the likelihood of participation.

*I dedicate this senior thesis to The Goon Squad.
Thanks for supporting me through the most demanding year of my academic career.*

I'd like to thank Holly Swyers and Scott Edgar for sitting on my thesis committee, as well as
Todd Beer, my chair, SOAN110 professor, and friend.

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Social movement theory is an interdisciplinary study that seeks to understand social mobilization. The field contributes to our understanding of human social action, as well as how and why social movements occur. However, a gap exists in social movement literature: Scholars and studies – as illustrated by the first chapter of this paper – tend to focus on how/why social movements emerge rather than why they *do not* occur. Before investigating this gap and the importance of participation, however, I must first discuss what constitutes a social movement and how it differs from other social activities – only then can I discuss the importance of this research and identify specific activities as social movements. Social movement theory is divided into four prominent trends: collective behavior, resource mobilization theory, political process theory, and new social movement theory (Diani 1992).

Turner and Killian (1957), early social movement theorists, define social movements as:

[a] collectivity acting with some continuity to promote or resist a change in the society or organization of which it is part. As a collectivity, a movement is a group with indefinite and shifting membership and with leadership whose position is determined more by informal response to adherents than by formal procedures for legitimizing authority (1957: 223).

Their conception of collective behavior, an early trend in understanding social movements, exists in contrast to organizational and institutional behavior; it instead represents a looser organizational principle than that existing in government or businesses. Their work establishes the necessity and nature of collective action in social movements as differentiated from other forms of social action, such as the necessary collective action in business offices, city life, and controlled military action (1957: 225). The term ‘social movement’ implies the mobilization of a plurality; thus, we can proceed with the established importance of collective behavior implicit in social movement.

McCarthy and Zald (1977) expand upon and alter this definition in their conceptualization of resource mobilization theory, which attributes greater importance to the movement existing in opposition to something; for them, a social movement is “a set of opinions and beliefs which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society” (1218). In other words, the social movement exists in opposition to the dominant social structure. Their work primarily seeks to understand why this action occurs, and is thus more attuned to the transformation of ideas to concrete action; they argue that resources are necessary in the formation of social movements (1977: 1220). Therefore, McCarthy and Zald posit that organizations are necessary in providing these resources and are thus essential for social movements to exist.

Charles Tilly’s 1978 work, in conversation with that of McCarthy and Zald (1978: 300), shifts the emphasis from the organizations themselves to the conditions that necessitate collective action; he writes that social movements are:

[a] sustained series of interactions between power holders and persons successfully claiming to speak on behalf of a constituency lacking formal representation, in the course of which those persons make publicly visible demands for changes in the distribution or exercise of power, and back those domains with public demonstrations of support (Tilly 1985: 303).

In broader terms, Tilly’s conceptualization of social movements targets specifically the importance of garnering support from power-holders to speak for those who lack formal representation. This briefly defines his political process model, which communicates the necessary involvement of the political system to ensure change. Additionally, the lack of representation invokes the idea of injustice. Tilly’s social movement takes into account the previous definitions insofar as it needs collectivity as an impetus for change, as well

as resources, but it serves to address injustice and requires public political backing to gain traction.

Touraine (1985) and Melucci (1989) expand on resource mobilization theory and the political process model in order to articulate *why* movements occur rather than *how* they are generated. The New Social Movement approach, as articulated by Alain Touraine in 1985, is defined as, “organized collective behavior of a class actor struggling against his class adversary for the social control of historicity in a concrete community” (203). New Social Movement theory concerns individuals and organizations struggling against larger, systemic cultural and economic issues rather than individual grievances; in this sense, social movements are inevitable wherever this systemic inequality exists. This perspective in social movement scholarship priorities identity, lifestyle, and culture rather than economic and political aspects, as resource mobilization and political process theories have done. Additionally, Touraine places emphasis on identity formation insofar as it is the mediator between individual and social movement; activity develops in “networks of groups and individuals sharing a conflictual culture and a collective identity” (1985:207).

Mario Diani (1992) takes these four aspects of in social movement scholarship – collective behavior, resource mobilization theory, political process, and new social movement theory – in order to conceptualize social movements in the broadest sense, as well as how they arise. He argues that all definitions share four common characteristics; a social movement, therefore, includes: “a) networks of informal interaction; b) shared beliefs and solidarity; c) collective action on conflictual issues; d) action which displays largely outside the institutional sphere and the routine procedures of social life” (7). This

definition points of the importance of both conflict and identity, which will be the most pertinent for this research.

These social movement scholars have defined social movements, how they arise, and what they target, but their work fails to identify why movements do not exist where one might expect. Implicit in this is the idea of participation; a cause or ongoing movement will fail due to a lack of contributors, as any sustained action relies upon participating bodies. In targeting the concept of participation and why individuals join or ignore movements, social movement theory as a field will gain a more comprehensive view of social action and inaction.

The purpose of this paper is to contribute to the existing body of literature concerning social movement theory. Participation, as previously noted, is necessary for forming and sustaining social movements. Thus, I explore how the manifestation of previously-developed mobilization theories – specifically cognitive liberation and collective identity – contribute to what I hypothesize to be an extra step in the individual's decision to join or avoid a specific social movement or social movement organization: the perception of a movement's success. This research includes participants from Lake Forest College – a small liberal arts school in the Midwest – and focuses primarily on the #BlackLivesMatter movement, as it is the most visible movement among students at said institution; in the past four years, it has been the only social cause to solicit a public demonstration. The context I establish based upon prior selected research revolves around the individual's conception of success and the ways in which this perception facilitates or hinders the likelihood of participation. I have two research questions:

1. In what ways do people assess the success of a social movement?

2. How does the perceived success affect participation?

In analyzing perceptions of success and the relation to participation, this research contributes to the understanding of why social movements not only succeed, but also fail.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

In analyzing the relationship between cognitive liberation and collective identity through frame analysis, this literature review will provide a better understanding of the perception of modern social movements. The discussion of this link will form the foundation for my research and how, if at all, a connection exists between the individual's perceived success of a movement and their chances of participating. Therefore, I have provided operational definitions for each term, as well as its role in the context of this study, in the following literature review.

Social Movement Involvement:

In order to assess the relationship between one's perception of a SM's success and their willingness to participate, one must first unpack the term 'participation.' Klandermans (2002) argues that there are two important dimensions to distinguish within the phenomenon of participation: *time* and *effort*, both of which exist on a spectrum. He writes that some forms of participation require little time and effort, such as signing a petition or giving money (360); others, such as sit-ins or occupations, require a relatively short time commitment, but a considerable effort or risk. Involvement can be indefinite, yet require little effort, such as paying a membership fee to an organization. Additionally, some forms of involvement require a significant amount of time and effort, such as being a volunteer in a movement organization.

For the purposes of this current study, participation will mean direct involvement in the form of attending a demonstration or educational speaker/panel. This is essential when measuring the #BlackLivesMatter participation on the Lake Forest College campus. I will not focus on political or emotionally motivated social media posts, but rather participation that requires relatively significant time and effort.

Student Movements:

This research takes place at a liberal arts college in the suburban Midwest. The following section details the societal position held by college students and how – if at all – it affects their chances of viewing a social movement as successful and/or participating in that movement. Though the following study takes place at an urban university, the results focus specifically on the importance of a shared student identity, and can thus apply to this research.

In an article written in 2010, authors Benjamin Giguère and Richard Lalonde argue that students in particular are forced to contemplate the future of society. Through this reflection, “many students often recognize that they have shared grievances ... These shared grievances can form the basis of the core ideas underlying their motivation for unity and social mobilization” (Giguère and Lalonde 2010:231). This idea points up the importance of shared experiences in creating a student identity. Giguère and Lalonde’s article focuses specifically on student movements in the Canadian province of Quèbec, wherein French-speaking students are essential to the sustenance of linguistic heritage. Results from data gathered on the 2005 Quèbec student strike suggest that a shared politicized group identity may provide students with an opportunity to connect to one another. Through this process, “politicized group members can more easily recognize and

value the benefits for their group peers of engaging in collective actions” (Giguère and Lalonde 2010: 235). From this, we can extrapolate that students mobilize – in part – because the group will benefit from their individual efforts to jointly mobilize. Therefore, students attending the same school – or people who identify as ‘students’ – and who are subjected to similar grievances may experience a shared identity. Experiencing a strong bond between group members may be one mean by which student activists perceive the mobilization ability of their group and the possible success of collective actions. Subsequently, according to Van Zomeren, Postmes, and Spears (2008), such perceptions are important causal determinants, increasing the motivation of group members to mobilize and engage in collective actions.

We can thus conclude that – in addition to the unique experience of living in a learning environment among peers – the shared identity formed out of residential college and university campus culture is a primary catalyst for on-campus activism and collective action.

Protesting Inequality:

The focal point of this study is the #BlackLivesMatter movement, which sprung into existence following police violence directed toward Black individuals. The movement itself targets the systemic racism experienced by people of color in the United States. The specificities of this movement are explored in Chapter 2, but movements that address inequality – such as #BlackLivesMatter – have received specific analysis in social movement literature.

David Pettinicchio (2015) discusses the emergence of political opportunities concomitant with the existence of inequality. In writing about the rise of inequality in

past decades, he cites William Gamson's prompt for participants of the 2011 Young Scholars in Social Movements Conference:

Until recently, there has been no popular surge of moral indignation at the unfairness of it all, and no social movement to demand to stop and reverse the trend (of inequality). People may be aware of this fact and angry about it, but their attention and anger don't seem to get channeled into organized collective action (Gamson 2011).

This quotation draws attention to the challenges faced by those who want to protest social inequality. Pettinicchio (2015) finds that the perceptions of structurally disadvantaged individuals generate higher chances of participating in collective action. However, despite this increased likelihood and desire to participate, they are often unable to act because of said disadvantage (Pettinicchio 2015). Finally, Pettinicchio (2015) writes that, "it is not enough for movements to increase awareness about unjust inequality. They must also persuade activists and the public that they have the ability to affect change" (2015). This places importance on how the individual views his/her place and actions in protesting inequality.

Pettinicchio, along with Katie E. Corcoran and Jacob T.N. Young (2015), investigate whether and how feelings of efficacy, structural disadvantage, and the interaction between the two shape the likelihood of individuals to participate in low, medium, and high-cost forms of political action. The study uses cross-national data of twenty-nine countries representing various levels of economic advancement, and defines low-cost participation as signing a petition or joining a boycott, medium-cost as participating in a lawful demonstration, and high-cost as an unofficial strike or occupation (Corcoran et al. 2015:14). The study found that individuals with perceptions of structural disadvantage have higher chances of participating in all types of collective action. This explains participation in high-cost forms of action when individuals also

perceive inequality as rooted in structural injustice (Corcoran et al. 2015:17). Therefore, in order for individuals to turn to a more disruptive form of action (high-cost), they must both perceive structural disadvantage as being unjust and also believe that their participation can affect change. Now that I have established the sociocultural context of this study – students protesting inequality – I will define the various theoretical features. They are: collective identity, cognitive liberation, frame analysis, and success.

Collective Identity:

In order to understand collective identity and its place in social movement scholarship, one must first have knowledge of identity as a whole. Identity, the means by which we define ourselves, each other, and our relation to others, is critically important to the rise of social movements (Diani 1992). Stryker (2000) defines and analyzes this social phenomenon by identifying four subcategories: social identity, collective identity, self-categorization theory, and identity salience.

Collective identity is the most relevant to this study; Stryker (2000) defines it as the shared sense of membership within a group by those who make up that group (290). Members share values, interests, and experiences, facilitating a sense of camaraderie. Adding to this definition, Polletta and Jasper (2001) define collective identity as: “an individual’s cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution” (285). Therefore, collective identity requires no direct interaction with members of a group, but instead an abstract connection.

In contrast, Stryker (2000) defines social identity as the individual’s knowledge of himself and his membership within certain groups, which helps to facilitate passionate and meaningful connections (292). This aspect of identity relies heavily on the

individual's acknowledgement of group membership, as well as the aspiration to be a part of something greater than the individual's solitary capabilities. Social identity is derived solely from interpersonal relationships, which exists in opposition to collective identity's relatively metaphysical nature. It is this distinction that supports my selection of collective identity rather than social identity: the recognition of shared values, interests, and experiences propels an individual toward social movement participation as the relationship exists between an individual and a concept rather than between singular people (McAdam 1982).

As asserted by McAdam in 2007, collective identity is a major catalyst in social movement participation. Collective action is the result of purposes, resources, and limits (Melucci 1999); collective action – essential to social movements (Diani 1992) – cannot simply rise from structural preconditions or the expression of values and/or beliefs (Melucci 1999:44). Individual participants must share experiences, as the production of collective action is the result of the ability to define oneself and one's relationship to the environment. This justifies my use of collective identity in assessing perceptions of success and subsequent participation, as it is essential for social movement engagement; I rely on the importance of the individual's perception of identity because the self-categorizing nature promotes an internal impetus for participation.

The ability to measure collective identity remains a challenge; thus, Stryker and Burke (2000) advocate for the development of a scale to measure the multiple dimensions of collective identity in a reliable and valid manner (290). Identity itself exists in seven dimensions: self-categorization, evaluation of the group, importance of the identity, attachment/sense of interdependence, social embeddedness, behavioral involvement, and context and meaning (Ashmore et al. 2004:83). This multidimensionality creates a nearly

insurmountable challenge to those attempting to measure the phenomenon. However, I have chosen to manage the scope of this study by working specifically with collective identity, as it narrows the field in which I have to work; I will only target self-categorization, as it encompasses the idea of membership (collective identity) rather than the practice (social identity). Though targeting self-categorization relies solely on the individual's perception of him/herself, it is the most applicable for this study; I am examining the ways in which *perception* promotes participation, and so self-categorization is wholly appropriate.

Cognitive Liberation:

The concept of cognitive liberation was originally introduced by Doug McAdam (1982) as one of the three central causal factors in his formulation of Political Process Theory. This process not only suggests that participants in collective action come to realize that something can be done to change and affect a situation, but that a collective “we” has the power to catalyze that change (Gamson 1992:91). Cognitive liberation is recognized as the, “true catalyst of emergent collective action” (McAdam et al. 2012:68). In addition to identity, measures of cognitive liberation are used to predict social movement participation.

McAdams' and Hilary Schaffer-Boudet, both social movement theorists, endeavor to unpack what causes social movements to succeed or fail (2012). The writers stress the critical importance of assessments of threat and opportunity – the actions of a cognitively liberated individual – as the key catalyst for mobilization (2012: 90). Their findings suggest that improving political conditions and the presence/emergence of ‘mobilizing structures’ lend participants only the *ability* to act; this does not serve to *motivate*

potential participants (McAdam and Schaffer-Boudet 2012: 96). The authors found that the absence of their primary variables, civic capacity and political opportunity – the lack of community ability and political leverage, respectively – aid in the explanation of non-mobilization. The absence of these variables affects the outcome condition – participation, in this case – because individuals do not perceive an ability to create change (McAdam and Schaffer-Boudet 2012:96). Therefore, cognitive liberation is an important factor in social movement participation; those who do not experience the social-psychological phenomenon view themselves as powerless, and are thus unlikely to mobilize.

Sharon Nepstad discusses cognitive liberation in a different context; she uses qualitative interviews with thirty-two Central American peace activists, analyzing cognitive liberation through the application of frame analysis. The author articulates a three-stage shift in consciousness as result of cognitive liberation: first, individuals no longer perceive the political or social system as legitimate or just; second a demand for change, catalyzed by the change in perception; and third, the belief that individuals previously thought of as powerless can in some way alter the situation (1997:471). The completion of these stages results in a “cognitively liberated” individual, as they are able to organize, seize political opportunities, and initiate and instigate change. These steps are important for the operationalization of cognitive liberation, as survey and/or interview questions can target each stage of the process.

Nepstad (1997) also calls attention to the limits of cognitive liberation; the concept is inherently transformative, as it conveys the individual’s articulation of *what* they believe, but not necessarily *how* those beliefs are altered. She concludes that individuals do not automatically move from one stage to the next (483). The employment

of a framing process is a necessary catalyst for the onset of cognitive liberation (1997:483).

Nepstad's, McAdams', and Schaffer-Boudet's scholarship conceptualizes cognitive liberation. While collective identity is essential for the formulation of interest and participation in social movements, cognitive liberation is the catalyzing force that brings active engagement. This supports my testing of cognitive liberation in assessing the individual's perception of a social movement's success and its relation to eventual participation, as it is vital for the achievement of mobilization.

Frame Analysis:

In order to further the movement's cause, social movement organizations must construct their respective issues and goals in order to attract the attention of possible members, supporters, and beneficiaries. This action, carried out by the movements and organizations themselves, is called framing. Derived from Goffman (1974) and employed by Snow, Benford, and their colleagues (1986), social movement frames seek to catalyze involvement and will thus impact the level of cognitive liberation and collective identity experienced by potential and perennial participants. As outlined by David Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Steven Worden, and Robert Benford in their 1986 paper, framing may take one or more of four forms: frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation. Frame bridging and amplification are the most pertinent to this study because they explicitly target the potential participant's identity and values.

Frame bridging, as detailed by Snow et al. (1986), is the "linkage of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem" (467). In other words, frame bridging seeks to attract those with similar

ideological beliefs that might otherwise have little else in common. The basis for frame bridging is the acknowledgement of an aligned ideology. Alternatively, frame amplification exploits an individual or organization's values and beliefs in order to create a previously unacknowledged or unknown importance (Snow et al. 1986:471); this type of frame serves to illuminate specific issues through explicitly stating a unity in values. Antagonists and targets are generated from this kind of frame alignment (Snow et al. 1986:472). Additionally, the establishment of this new importance creates the necessity to take action. Though frame bridging and frame amplification are different methods of framing, they both facilitate the development of a collective identity through the isolation of shared values and the creation of an "us" versus "them" dichotomy.

Though the primary goal of framing is to align the views of potential supporters with a particular social movement, it can also serve three distinct tasks. Snow and Benford (1988) articulate each task: diagnostic framing, which serves to identify a problem to attribute blame and causality; prognostic framing, which offers both a solution and a target; and motivational framing, which serves as the mobilizing 'call to arms' (200-202). Nepstad (1997) argues that these tasks can facilitate progression through the stages of cognitive liberation; diagnostic framing highlights injustice, prognosis framing articulates a target and focus for demands of change, while motivational framing persuades prospective participants that change is possible. It is therefore essential that I include frame analysis as a means of articulating collective identity and cognitive liberation, as these social phenomena are created by particular frames. Frames aid in understanding the genesis of an individual's collective identity and cognitive liberation experience.

Success:

William Gamson (1975) provides one of the first attempts to conceptualize success in his study and analysis of fifty-three social movement organizations between 1800 and 1945. He includes the disclaimer that success is an “elusive” idea (28), and continues on to write that success should be discussed as a set of outcomes. He splits these outcomes into separate clusters: one centered on the fate of the challenging group (if the social movement organization fails or continues to exist), the other on the distribution of reward (Gamson 1975:28). He then poses two questions to social movements: “Did its antagonist accept [the social movement organization] as a valid spokesman for the constituency that it was attempting to mobilize or did it deny such acceptance?”, and, “Did the group gain the advantages it sought” (Gamson 1975:30)? These questions illustrate both recognition and the possibility of gaining the intended benefit – i.e. reaching a goal. Gamson then begins to unpack the ideas of *endpoint* and *outcome*. An endpoint can refer to dissolution of the social movement, a cessation in mobilization, or the recognition by the group’s major antagonists of the group as valid (Gamson 1975:31). Gamson articulates outcomes in terms of acceptance – a change from hostility or indifference to a more positive relationship – and new advantages. These take the form of four indicators: consultation, negotiation, formal recognition, and inclusion (Gamson 1975: 32).

However, Gamson’s work is subject to critique; the findings, originally published in 1975, are subject to the rapid modernization of techniques and mobilization. In a reflection, written in 1989, Gamson points out two main challenges his study now faces; the rise of the national security state and the rise of technology and mass-media may prevent the social movement from achieving its goals (455). Additionally, in response to

the original book, Jack Goldstone (1980) targets the potential for assuming causation in Gamson's study; his article stresses the assumed correlations between mobilization and social movement success. This particular research engages in the tangible defining of success based on outcomes, whereas mine will discuss individual perception based on social movement actions. I will evade the aforementioned causation with my choice to use personal perceptions of success rather than attempting to discern success through the movement's action.

How do potential participants perceive social movement success? Though the guidelines provided by Gamson and Goldstone articulate important aspects of social movement success, individual participants and outsiders may not have the ability to acknowledge or observe the more global effects of a movement. The following section should be viewed as the individual's analysis: the means by which a singular person immersed in the movement may perceive social movement success.

In the following section, I will detail two articles concerning social movement success in regard to the social movement's reputation and past actions as well as the movement's reputation in conjunction with the formation of institutional norms.

Catherine Corrigan-Brown (2015) challenges the relationship between a social movement organization's identity and the perceived legitimacy of their tactics. Corrigan-Brown argues that group identity can shape public understanding of tactics: "The use of a tactic, and the benefit a group receives from using that tactic, is in part the result of how they are perceived and who they are seen to be within their larger movement" (Corrigan-Brown 2015). In this study, the author cites both Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Fund; she studied Greenpeace's contentious protest tactics in relation to the World Wildlife Fund's collaboration with Coke in their campaign to protect polar bears. These

examples are highly indicative of the ideologies and tactics presented by both organizations. Corrigan-Brown discovered an interactive relationship between the organization and the media in comparing the use of research and how it shapes news coverage; when the WWF uses research in press releases, their media coverage does not change. However, when Greenpeace uses research to substantiate a press release, they receive – on average – two less articles written about them that month (Corrigan-Brown 2015). Additionally, when the WWF calls upon the public to engage in an environmental issue, their media coverage does not change. When Greenpeace promotes activism, they receive – on average – three more articles that month. The interaction between reputation, subsequent tactics, and the media highlights the ways in which a group's identity shapes public perspective and understanding of the social movement organization at large. Therefore, reputation and tactics influence the means by which individuals perceive the success and actions of a movement. However, the media is not always indicative of public opinion. Despite this caveat, media coverage aids in shaping public perception, thus validating the use of this article in defining how the potential participant understands a social movement.

Similar to Corrigan-Brown, Kallman (2015) discusses the professional identity that has emerged within the rhetoric of social change through detailing the socialized internalization of neoliberal policy and the way in which it is changing/has changed the landscape of social movements:

We [Americans] now primarily think about free markets, commodification, formal organizations, and individual people (rather than policy, for instance, or informal or collective organizing) as how social change is made... we got the idea that formalized, professionalized social movement organizations were the most effective type of organizing (Kallman 2015).

She cites the shift as a result of neoliberal economic policies and subsequent socialization. However, Kallman writes that this high level of professionalization has been detrimental to the understanding of social change: “it has *permitted us to see activism where none exists*” (Kallman 2015, italics in original). She then switches directions, stating that social movement actions are necessarily rethought because organizations must take into consideration the limits of professionalism (Kallman 2015). Further: “Professional social change organizations are not as well suited as grassroots community groups – formal or not – to responding in dramatic and, if need be, confrontational ways to pressing issues” (Kallman 2015). Kallman suggests that it is perhaps this – the neoliberal shift to professionalism in social activism and subsequent inability to address issues that may warrant confrontational action – that serves as a catalyst for a change in the perception of success. If a social movement is dominated completely by both grassroots and professional organizations, grassroots organizations such as Occupy and #BlackLivesMatter may not be seen as successful because of the social movement’s perceived inability to address issues as a professional organization.

Both Corrigan-Brown and Kallman argue that individuals are likely to formulate opinions on social movements and their successes based on: legitimization, social movement reputation, media coverage, and the neoliberal shift to professionalism and subsequent inability for social movements to work within the confines of a neoliberal system.

Approach for Current Research:

For the analysis in this research, I borrowed from both William Gamson and Sharon Nepstad. Both employ analyses of frames and cognitive liberation in order to

understand social movement participation. Therefore, I will analyze cognitive liberation and collective identity through the use of frame analysis in order to determine the individual's perception of success in social movements. This approach embodies both the individual's perceived ability to make a difference (cognitive liberation) and a potential body or idea with which they may align themselves (collective identity). Based on the existing literature, I have determined three hypotheses to drive this study:

H1. Students who experience cognitive liberation are more likely to participate in social movement activities.

H2. The experience of cognitive liberation and/or identity affects the individual's perception of social movement success.

H3. The more an individual perceives a social movement to be successful, the more likely they are to participate in the social movement .

The first hypothesis is in line with the arguments presented in the literature review; the second and third are derived from existing theory but have yet to be tested. These hypotheses will help me to analyze the conceptualization of success and attempt to demonstrate the relationship between perceptions of success and social movement participation.

CHAPTER 2: #BLACKLIVESMATTER AS A CASE STUDY

Before a frame analysis of the #BlackLivesMatter movement, I must first establish its actions as a social movement. In applying Diani's (1992) definition – that a social movement is a plurality of individuals with a common identity characteristic engaged in a cultural or political conflict – the #BlackLivesMatter actions undeniably fit into the social movement framework. #BlackLivesMatter is composed of both formal and informal groups – the official organization and broader protest participants – who seek to address the issues of police brutality and racial inequality. The movement's participants are active because they share a similar value-based identity; they want to change systemic racism and inequality. Therefore, #BlackLivesMatter is a social movement; it is not just collective action, but action based on shared values and perceived injustice.

The movement came into existence after the 2012 death of Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old African American killed by neighborhood watch coordinator George Zimmerman. Zimmerman was acquitted of second-degree murder, sparking outrage within the black community and catalyzing the movement at large. #BlackLivesMatter is, “rooted in the experience of Black people in this country who actively resist our de-humanization,” and is a “call to action and a response to the virulent anti-Black racism that permeates our society” (BlackLivesMatter 2015); it seeks to broaden the conversation about violence towards black individuals while seeking justice for victims of racial violence. According to their official website, the #BlackLivesMatter movement works to “(re)build the Black liberation movement” (BlackLivesMatter 2015). The movement rallies around the perceived wrongful acts committed against Black Americans and seeks intersectionality among all genders, those with disabilities, and socioeconomic classes.

The violent deaths of hundreds of black individuals and perceived lack of justice catalyzed a massive wave of national protests. According to Legal Monitor Worldwide, the movement rapidly synchronized – despite the relative disorganization of its tools and actions – through the use of the #BlackLivesMatter, #ThisStopsToday, and #ICantBreathe hashtags. Additionally, many protestors continue to display the ‘hands-up’ posture and stage/participate in ‘die-ins.’

A brief analysis of movement tactics and participation indicates that the #BlackLivesMatter movement employs a combination of frame bridging, frame amplification, and domain specific frame transformation. As mentioned in my literature review, the frame refers to the way in which social movements and organizations attract new members and control public perception. This frame analysis is important insofar as it will aid in the development of my results section. Through detailing the ways in which #BlackLivesMatter pitches itself to the public, I am able to isolate specific variables – primarily identity-related phenomena, but also cognitive liberation. The most applicable frames in the #BlackLivesMatter movement are frame bridging and frame amplification. As illustrated in the literature review, frame bridging seeks to attract individuals and organizations with similar ideological beliefs, whereas frame amplification serves to illuminate particular issues and causes by articulating a unity in social values. Both frames are predicated upon a shared identity: for frame bridging, it is ideology, and for frame amplification, it is an acknowledged unity in values through the formation of an ‘enemy.’

The movement’s use of frame bridging provides impetus for the involvement of an individual who does not suffer from the threat of systematized racism and police brutality. By framing the movement as something that is relevant to those in systematized

poverty, the #BlackLivesMatter movement is able to tap into the broader oppressed population and inspire potential participants. These individuals may be concerned about or experiencing different types of inequality, but it is not necessarily racial in nature. In framing #BlackLivesMatter as a cause devoted to addressing different types of inequality – for example, the movement’s insistence on liberating the black poor as a means of tackling broader class discrimination (Ransby 2015) – in addition to the explicit race concern, the movement appeals to others who may feel as though they have been taken advantage of by people in power. By extension, #BlackLivesMatter’s use of frame amplification, through actions such as targeting progressive Presidential Candidate Bernie Sanders, creates self-importance by isolating a target of protest; in emphasizing the wrongdoings of police officers, individuals who may not be knowledgeable in regard to the actual goals of the movement are able to conceptualize an ‘enemy.’ The articulation of this ‘enemy’ is accessible to people outside of the movement, making public what is generally seen as private.

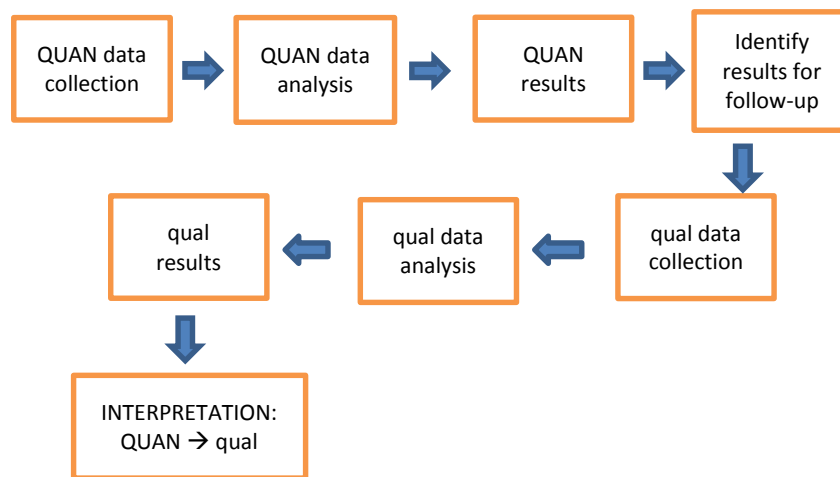
The frame analysis supports my use of identity as a variable in determining participation in the #BlackLivesMatter social movement; the movement’s use of two identity-heavy frames, as well as its inclusion of other oppressed populations, provides a base for the development of my findings.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS AND MEASURES

I have chosen to employ the Exploratory Design mixed method in this research project. The approach engages in both quantitative and qualitative data; the quantitative data gathered from surveys is used to guide the collection of qualitative data. The purpose of this method is to use quantitative data to identify significant variables – hypothesized

to be cognitive liberation and collective identity – in order to create the qualitative interview protocol, therefore “explain[ing] or build[ing] upon initial quantitative results” (Creswell 2007: 71). The method is shown in the following chart, taken from Creswell’s chapter on choosing a mixed methods approach.

Fig. 3.1 Explanatory Design: Follow-up Explanations Model



According to Creswell (2007), the Explanatory Design is considered the most straightforward of mixed methods approaches to data collection and analysis (74). The separation of qualitative from quantitative phases streamlines both data collection and analysis; in being able to conduct different methods in different phases, the researcher must only collect one type of data at a time. Consequentially, the research may be conducted by an individual rather than a research team (2007: 74). Additionally, the interpretation and results section may be written in two sections, creating an easier experience for both researcher and reader. Drawbacks of this mixed method include difficulties in securing IRB approval (the interview protocol is derived from the

quantitative data and is thus not provided in original applications), selection of qualitative participants, and the length of time it may take to gather data.

I have chosen this approach to data collection because the engagement in both quantitative and qualitative data, which are necessary to answer my research questions; cognitive liberation and collective identity must be measured in terms of statistical significance to assess their impact on success, while the conceptualization of success requires in-depth verbal interrogation. For this reason, the implementation of the Explanatory Design is essential to this research project. The quantitative data is used to understand the degree to which the individual is ‘cognitively liberated.’ This is something relatively difficult to discern in qualitative interviews, as the participant’s answer may be affected by the presence of the researcher; they may alter responses throughout the duration of the interview in accordance with previous answers or attempt to perform. This is also true of reporting various identities; participants are more likely to respond truthfully when identifying as activists or non-activists in the absence of the researcher during reporting. Participants may have responded untruthfully to these prompts in an interview because of the want to perform a specific identity. Results of quantitative data are also necessary for the development of interview protocol; if unpredicted trends emerge, they are easily discussed and parsed in interviews.

The qualitative data is necessary in order to understand the conceptualization of success in social movements. This idea is more easily understood in the context of a conversation because the interviewee is able to talk through their understanding of the social phenomenon with the guidance of prompts provided by the interviewer. The success is not easily understood quantitatively because I do not seek statistical relationships; instead, I aim to synthesize individual definitions to create a broader

understanding of social movement success. The qualitative data also serves to illuminate the quantitative; in parsing success through interviews, I am able to better understand the quantitative responses regarding cognitive liberation. A more comprehensive understanding of social movement perception can be gained from analyzing the lived experience of qualitative participants in light of what is statistically significant.

Sample:

My quantitative sample includes a total of 53 Lake Forest College students. The survey was distributed in public spaces and classrooms between December 1st and December 17th, 2015. Because of the relative lack of success in tabling outside the Lake Forest College dining hall, I asked professors if I could distribute surveys at either the beginning or end of their classes. Of these professors, only three agreed; the majority of surveys were completed by students in an English literature class, a Sociology/Anthropology qualitative methods class, and a music ensemble. Individuals representing the sophomore, junior, and senior classes completed 3-5 minute surveys and, if interested, subsequent voluntary interviews. I refrained from soliciting freshmen, as I aimed to target student experiences with the on-campus #BlackLivesMatter events during the 2014/2015 academic year. Of the original 53 distributed surveys, all were returned complete. Additionally, 14 individuals indicated they would like to participate in interviews, while 9 followed through with the offer; survey-takers indicated interest in further participation by including their email addresses on a separate sheet of paper provided during the survey process.

Surveys:

Surveys were distributed to all participants. The survey results provided a direction for the development of my interview protocol. This method provided data regarding cognitive liberation and collective identity. Fifty three surveys were completed by 11 sophomores, 26 juniors, and 17 seniors. Of the 53 participants, there were 33 women, 18 men, 1 non-binary, and 1 who declined to answer. Furthermore, 4 individuals identified as Hispanic/Latino, 5 as black, 1 as “Northern African,” 4 as Asian, and 39 as white. I decided to omit gender as a variable; though there may be a correlation between gender and likelihood to participate in social activism, it is not the focus of this study.

The survey was broken into four distinct parts: how one perceives successful activism, cognitive liberation, identity alignment, and participation in #BlackLivesMatter activities (see Appendix A for the full survey instrument). I included these sections in order to target specific variables in my hypotheses such as cognitive liberation, collective identity, success, and participation. Though the survey was intended to glean quantitative data, I left room for qualitative responses. This information informed the direction taken by the interviews.

I included the identity alignment section in order to measure what it means to be a ‘successful’ social movement. This decision comes straight from the literature review, as I posit that the way in which one perceives success is derived directly from identity alignment and cognitive liberation. By identifying with individuals already involved or impacted by a given social movement, I hypothesize there is a greater chance of the potential participant viewing the social movement as successful (“people like me are making a difference”) and, subsequently involving themselves in some aspect of collective action. The survey questions involving identity alignment served to tackle this

potential claim. Questions regarding participation in #BlackLivesMatter activities sought to gauge level of involvement and interest in the movement of focus, as well as to identify an independent variable. Because cognitive liberation is harder to analyze than identity alignment, I decided to use the interviews in order to delve deeper into the social-psychological phenomenon.

Interviews:

Out of the 14 who indicated interest in interviews, 9 agreed to be participants. The sample was composed of one sophomore, three juniors, and five seniors. Of the individuals, 2 identified as black, two as 'brown' (self-reported), one as Asian, and four as white. Interviews took place in private spaces around campus – library study rooms, the campus radio station, and student center study rooms – and were audio recorded, transcribed, and analyzed by the researcher. The conversations ranged from 30 to 50 minutes in length and followed a general outline: the discussion of former participation, thoughts on the #BlackLivesMatter movements, a conversation regarding Lake Forest College, and an attempt to conceptualize success. These interviews were recorded, transcribed, and sent to participants for member checks in order to ensure statement validity. In order to indicate interest in participating in an interview, individuals supplied their email addresses after completing the survey. All of those indicating interest were interviewed. In keeping with my choice to use the exploratory sequential mixed methods design, complete interview protocol was derived from data gathered in the survey portion of this study. Conversations were split into two distinct parts: history/experience and reflections (Seidman 2005).

Initial analysis of the quantitative data was necessary for the development of this interview protocol (see Appendix B for the interview protocol that guided the open-ended interviews). After determining the degree to which the sample was ‘cognitively liberated,’ as well as how much they identified with the activist identity, I was able to determine the trajectory of the interview. For example, the importance of reaching goals as an indicator of success, as identified by the quantitative data, heavily informed the conversations surrounding its conceptualization; the emphasis on reaching goals in social movements may not have been introduced into the conversation if not for the preliminary understandings and findings provided by survey data.

The first part of the interview was designed to understand exactly how much interest and experience the participants demonstrate in regards to social activism. This was meant to gauge the level of interest in the #BlackLivesMatter movement, as well as what trajectory the interview would eventually take. This section played an important role in the interview process because it provided a basic understanding as to why the individual in question would choose to get involved in a social movement. Directly following this section, questions turned to opinions and knowledge of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. The section was intended to understand the individual’s interest in the movement and how, if at all, the participant would like to change and/or get involved in the cause. I then instigated a broad discussion of what it means for a movement to be successful. These questions focused specifically on the idea of pre-established movement/organization goals, the reasons why each participant would get involved in a social movement, and whether or not they felt encouraged or discouraged to join. This conversation targets directly a central aim of the research project; though the

quantitative data may inform the analysis of participation levels, the discussion of success helped develop the reasons behind that participation.

CHAPTER 4: QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Understanding successful activism:

The first part of the survey included a scenario meant to identify a specific variable in the formation of perceptions of success. Two vignettes were distributed on separate surveys; 26 individuals received the first scenario, whereas 27 received the second.

VIGNETTE 1: In 1999, a Seattle activist group protested through rallies and marches. Their intent was to increase awareness of the issue at hand. It catalyzed an increase in media coverage. No laws were passed to address the problem.

VIGNETTE 2: In 1999, a Seattle activist group protested through rallies and marches. Their intent was to increase awareness of the issue at hand. There was no increase in media coverage, but laws were passed to address the problem.

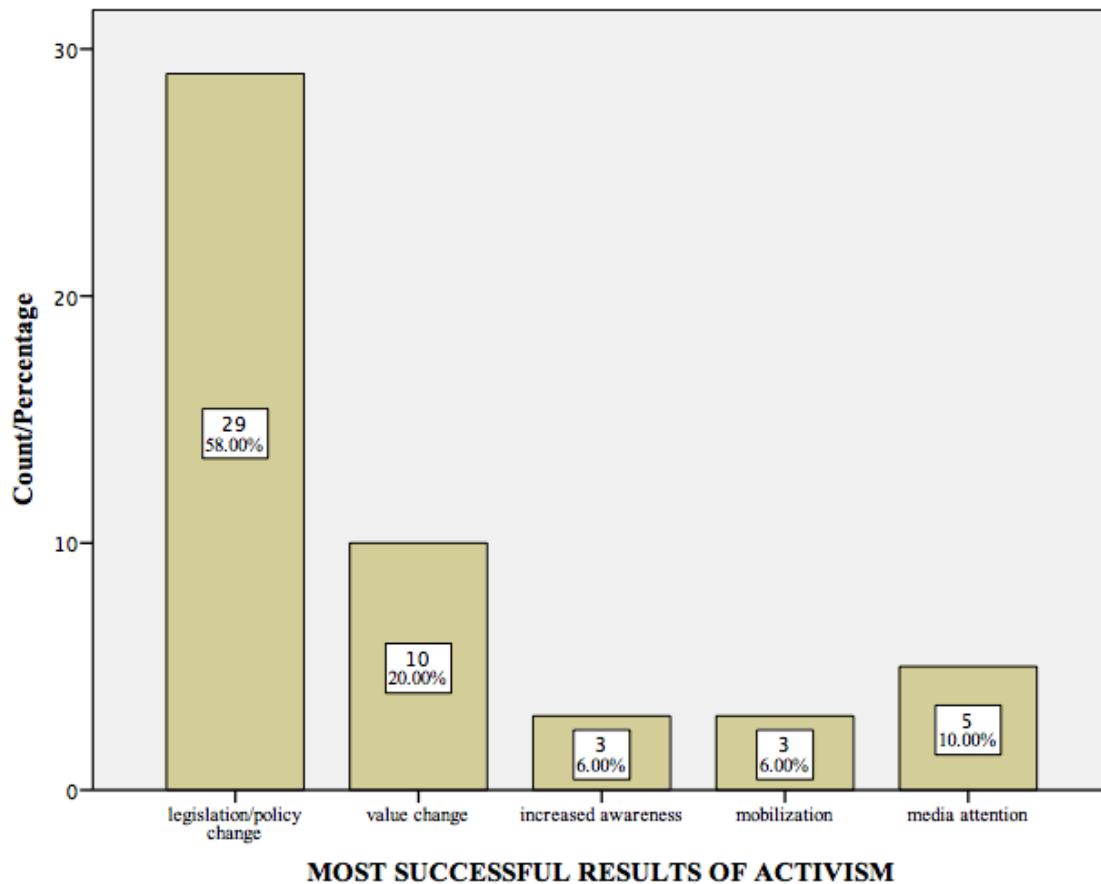
In providing these scenarios, the participants were forced to take into consideration what specifically informs the success of a social movement; is it the reaching of pre-defined goals, the creation of legislation, or the generation of media attention?

Participants reported responses by circling either “yes” or “no” and providing an explanation. Of the 26 participants who received the first scenario, 5 (19.2%) indicated that it was *not* an example of successful activism. Additionally, 2 – 7.3% of the 27

individuals to receive the second scenario, reported that the activism was unsuccessful. However, the overwhelming majority of participants (first scenario: 80.8%; second scenario: 92.6%) agreed that their assigned scenarios were examples of successful activism. The 11.8% difference, however, indicates that the successful passage of laws was seen as more successful than media coverage alone. Moreover, those receiving the first scenario were persuaded of its success because of its ability to achieve the pre-set goal of creating awareness, whereas those who received the second did so because of the passing of legislation.

Later in the survey, participants were asked to rank potential results (1-6) of social movements in regard to their demonstration of successful activism. The results corroborate the idea that legislative success is most important to the sample; 29 of the 50 participants to answer this question ranked “legislative change” as their first choice. Of those 29, the most popular last choices – ranked 6th – were value change and media attention, i.e. products of activism that are unable to be measured and have no direct impact on legislation. However, of the remaining 21 participants, 10 individuals ranked “value change” as a first choice, 3 ranked “increased awareness,” 5 ranked “media attention,” and 3 ranked “mobilization.” This information is presented in the following bar graph:

Fig. 4.1 Reported Successful Results of Activism



These answers indicate a split in opinion; nearly half of the sample is interested in legislative change, whereas the other advocates for success on a purely social and personal level. This data was used to formulate the trajectory of my interviews; in examining this split, I was better able to conceptualize success.

Cognitive liberation and participation:

An interesting and statistically significant relationship exists between #BlackLivesMatter participation and cognitive liberation. The survey included a set of measures to test the three steps of cognitive liberation: the acknowledgement of a problem, the want to change/solve the problem, and the thought that the individual has the ability to change the problem. In response to, “Too often, police in the U.S. resort to

violence when engaging black citizens,” 2% strongly disagreed, 3.8% disagreed, 15.4% were neutral, 42.3% agreed, and 36.5% strongly agreed. The majority of participants have reached the first step of cognitive liberation, as 78.8% identified an existing problem. The relationship between this step of cognitive liberation and participation in the #BlackLivesMatter movement is statistically significant, as demonstrated in tables 4.2 and 4.3. Individuals who did not report a perceived problem with police violence were less likely to participate; none of these 11 respondents chose to participate. Though those who reported perceiving a problem with police violence split on participation (51.2% did not attend an event, while 48.8% did), the relationship between the perception of a problem and participation is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

Response patterns to the second statement, “I want to change this system of police violence,” were similar; only 2% disagreed, whereas 17.3% remained neutral, 42.3% agreed, and 38.5% strongly agreed. As demonstrated in tables 4.4 and 4.5, the relationship between the second step of cognitive liberation and #BlackLivesMatter participation is statistically significant. Individuals who do not want to change the system of police violence (10) did not participate in the #BlackLivesMatter Movement. Those who want to change the system were – again – split almost evenly; however, the relationship between wanting to address an issue and participating in the social movement is statistically significant ($p = 0.004$).

However, participants wavered in the last statement measuring their ability to make change; in response to, “I feel that I have the ability to change the system of police violence,” 3.8% strongly disagreed, 36.5% disagreed, 36.5% were neutral, 17.3% agreed, and 5.8% strongly agreed. While only 23% of participants believe they have the ability to change the system, the majority of respondents do not believe that they personally can

have an effect on the perceived system of police violence and brutality. Despite this the majority of participants not reaching this third step, those who experienced full cognitive liberation were more likely to participate in the #BlackLivesMatter movement.

Tables 4.6 and 4.7 illustrate the relationship between perceived ability to change police violence and participation in the #BlackLivesMatter movement. As shown, those displaying lesser degrees of cognitive liberation – as indicated by the “strongly disagree/disagree” category – did not participate in on- or off-campus #BlackLivesMatter events. However, those who reported “agree/strongly agree” were more likely to participate.

Because of my small sample size and one cell in the cross-tabulation having only five respondents, the Fisher’s Exact Test is the most appropriate test of significance. In this case, $p = 0.040$, meaning that the relationship is significant at the 95% level of confidence. These results are not by chance and can therefore be applied to the population from which the sample is drawn – in this case, the students of Lake Forest College. Therefore, students in this sample displaying high levels of cognitive liberation on the issue of police violence have a higher chance of participating in the #BlackLivesMatter in social movement. The literature predicted as such, and the statistical significance supports my first hypothesis.

Table 4.2 Participated in BLM by “Police often resort to violence.” Crosstabulation

		“Police often resort to violence.”		Total	
		neutral/disagree/ strongly disagree	agree/strongly agree		
Participated in BLM	no	Count	11	21	32
		% within “Police often resort to violence.”	100.0%	51.2%	61.5%
	yes	Count	0	20	20
		% within “Police often resort to violence.”	0.0%	48.8%	38.5%
Total		Count	11	41	52
		% within “Police often resort to violence.”	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.3 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2- sided)	Exact Sig. (2- sided)	Exact Sig. (1- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.720 ^a	1	.003		
Continuity Correction ^b	6.780	1	.009		
Likelihood Ratio	12.479	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.004	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.552	1	.003		
N of Valid Cases	52				

a. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.23.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Table 4.4 Participated in BLM by “I want to change the system of police violence.” Crosstabulation

			“I want to change the system of police violence.”		Total
			neutral/disagree/strongly disagree	agree/strongly agree	
Participated in BLM	no	Count	10	22	32
		% within “I want to change the system of police violence.”	100.0%	52.4%	61.5%
	yes	Count	0	20	20
		% within “I want to change the system of police violence.”	0.0%	47.6%	38.5%
Total	Count		10	42	52
	% within “I want to change the system of police violence.”		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.5 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.738 ^a	1	.005		
Continuity Correction ^b	5.857	1	.016		
Likelihood Ratio	11.164	1	.001		
Fisher's Exact Test				.008	.004
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.589	1	.006		
N of Valid Cases	52				

a. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.85.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Table 4.6 Participated in BLM by “I have the ability to change police violence.” Crosstabulation

			“I have the ability to change police violence.”		Total
			neutral/disagree/ strongly agree	strongly agree/agree	
Participated in BLM	no	Count	27	5	32
		% within “I have the ability to change police violence.”	71.1%	38.5%	62.7%
	yes	Count	11	8	19
		% within “I have the ability to change police violence.”	28.9%	61.5%	37.3%
Total		Count	38	13	51
		% within “I have the ability to change police violence.”	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.7 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.401 ^a	1	.036		
Continuity Correction ^b	3.118	1	.077		
Likelihood Ratio	4.300	1	.038		
Fisher's Exact Test				.050	.040
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.315	1	.038		
N of Valid Cases	51				

a. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.84.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Identity and cognitive liberation's effect on perceived success:

One question in the survey concerned the degree to which the participants identified with the #BlackLivesMatter movement/protestors, as well as their experiences with cognitive liberation. This directly addresses my second hypothesis. When asked how strongly the individual identified with the 'activist' persona (in general), 17 responded negatively (33.33%), 21 marked 'neutral (41.18%), and 13 identified as activists (25.49%). Responses to the statement, "Others consider me to be an activist," remained relatively similar: 21 responded negatively, 19 neutrally, and 12 positively. However, opinions split in regard to the participants' place within the #BlackLivesMatter movement; in response to the statement, "I am a part of the #BlackLivesMatter social movement," 15.4% strongly disagreed, 15.4% disagreed, 32.6% were neutral, 30.8% agreed, and 5.8% strongly agreed. Only 36.6%, or a little over a third, identified as part of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. Interestingly, results stayed relatively constant in response to the statement, "I perceive myself to be similar to other members of the #BlackLivesMatter movement"; 13.4% strongly disagreed, 25% disagreed, 38.5% responded neutrally, and 23.1% agreed.

The relationship between cognitive liberation and the perceived success of the #BlackLivesMatter movement is calculated in tables 4.8 and 4.9. Though the relationship is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), we must observe an important trend; most liberated individuals that lack cognitive liberation reported that #BlackLivesMatter is unsuccessful. Though answers reported by the cognitively liberated participants are split evenly, those that report cognitive liberation are more likely to report #BlackLivesMatter to be successful as compared to those not experiencing cognitive liberation.

Table 4.8 Perceived Success of #BlackLivesMatter by “I have the ability to change police violence” Crosstabulation

		“I have the ability to change police violence.”			
			neutral/disagree/strongly disagree	strongly agree/agree	Total
SUCCESS OF BLM	unsure/not successful	Count	26	6	32
		% within “I have the ability to change police violence.”	70.3%	50.0%	65.3%
	successful	Count	11	6	17
		% within “I have the ability to change police violence.”	29.7%	50.0%	34.7%
Total		Count	37	12	49
		% within “I have the ability to change police violence.”	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table. 4.9 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.643 ^a	1	.200		
Continuity Correction ^b	.870	1	.351		
Likelihood Ratio	1.593	1	.207		
Fisher's Exact Test				.296	.175
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.610	1	.205		
N of Valid Cases	49				

a. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.16.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

The relationship between race and the perception of #BlackLivesMatter success is the most salient and statistically significant for the outcome of this study.

Table 4.10 Perceived Success of BLM by Race Crosstabulation

			Race		Total
			non-white	white	
Perceived Success of BLM	unsure/not successful	Count	12	22	34
		% within Race	92.3%	57.9%	66.7%
	successful	Count	1	16	17
		% within Race	7.7%	42.1%	33.3%
Total	Count		13	38	51
	% within Race		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.10, a cross-tabulation of the respondent's race and the degree to which they perceive the #BlackLivesMatter movement to be successful, shows the demographic breakdown of perceptions of success. As illustrated, 92.3% of non-white respondents are either unsure of the movement's success or are critical of its effect. Only 1 (7.7%) non-white participant deemed the #BlackLivesMatter movement to be successful. Of the white participants, 57.9% were either unsure or critical of the movement's success, whereas 42.1% perceived it to be effective. Table 4.11 demonstrates the significance of this relationship.

Table 4.11 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.162 ^a	1	.023		
Continuity Correction ^b	3.730	1	.053		
Likelihood Ratio	6.146	1	.013		
Fisher's Exact Test				.038	.022
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.061	1	.024		
N of Valid Cases	51				

a. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.33.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

As illustrated, the p-value determined by Fisher's Exact Test is 0.038, which is below the standard gauge of significance ($p < 0.05$). This means that Lake Forest College students of color tend to be more critical of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. This points to the importance of identity alignment when determining a movement's success; because the #BlackLivesMatter movement targets the rights and privileges of people of color, students within the targeted demographic may believe that the movement has yet to make any substantial change that, in their minds, defines success.

Similarly, the relationship between class (sophomore, junior, senior) and perceptions of success proved to be significant. In order to account for the small sample size, I placed sophomores and juniors – those with less college experience – in a single category while keeping seniors – students with the most college experience – in a single group. Table 4.12 illustrates the breakdown of percentages. As shown, 74.3% of sophomores and juniors were either unsure or convinced of the lack of #BlackLivesMatter success, while 43.8% of seniors believe the same. In contrast, 25.7% of sophomores or juniors believe the movement to be successful, while 56.3% responded similarly. The significance of this finding is demonstrated in table 4.13.

The p-value of 0.034 demonstrates statistical significance at the 95% confidence level. The relationship between these variables may take into consideration the amount of knowledge regarding the #BlackLivesMatter movement one gains as they progress through college. It is important to keep in mind that the potential response was “unsure/unsuccessful,” so the students who are younger/in a lower year of college may not be privy to the timeline and goals of the movement itself rather than confidently reporting it as unsuccessful.

Table 4.12 Perceived Success of BLM by Class Crosstabulation

		Class		
		sophomore or junior	senior	Total
Perceived Success of BLM	unsure/not successful	Count	26	7
		% within Class	74.3%	43.8%
	successful	Count	9	9
		% within Class	25.7%	56.3%
Total		Count	35	16
		% within Class	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.13 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.483 ^a	1	.034		
Continuity Correction ^b	3.246	1	.072		
Likelihood Ratio	4.390	1	.036		
Fisher's Exact Test				.057	.037
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.395	1	.036		
N of Valid Cases	51				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.65.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

This knowledge may be predicated upon awareness; when Trayvon Martin was killed, sophomores in this study were 15 years old, whereas seniors were 18 – they had just entered college. This again points to the importance of age in perceiving success, as older individuals are ideally able to control their personal media consumption and think more critically.

Relationship between perceived success and participation:

The question, “Are you more or less likely to join a social movement if you perceive it to be successful?” directly addresses my third hypothesis. The majority of respondents (88.5%) said that they would be more likely to join a social movement if it is perceived to be successful. The explanation for these responses will be further explored in the interviews. Only 6 out of 52 participants (11.5%) responded with “less likely.” Interestingly, 5 out of the 6 individuals stated that the most successful activism results in the passing of legislation; the other participant marked “passing of legislation” as the second most successful after writing in “coup d’état” as his first choice. The data therefore indicates that goals have been reached, and that new issues may need attention. For these individuals, the passing of legislation is the end-game for most social movements and organizations. Because this is the most successful result of activism, they do not believe there is any more work to do. Therefore, in perceiving a movement as successful, these individuals indicated they are less likely to join because the work is already complete.

Another test of the relationship between perceptions of success and participation is illustrated in the following tables:

Table 4.14 Participated in BLM by Perceived Success of BLM

		Perceived success of BLM		
		unsure/not successful	successful	Total
Participated in BLM	no	Count	23	9
		% within Perceived Success of BLM	69.7%	50.0%
	yes	Count	10	9
		% within Perceived Success of BLM	30.3%	50.0%
Total	Count		33	18
	% within Perceived Success of BLM		100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.15 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2- sided)	Exact Sig. (1- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.933 ^a	1	.164		
Continuity Correction ^b	1.182	1	.277		
Likelihood Ratio	1.912	1	.167		
Fisher's Exact Test				.228	.139
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.895	1	.169		
N of Valid Cases	51				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.71.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Though the Fisher's Exact test does not show statistical significance ($p > 0.05$), the distribution remains interesting; of the individuals who participated in a #BlackLivesMatter event, half (9) said they would be more likely to join a social movement if they perceived it to be successful. Additionally, those who did not perceive

the #BlackLivesMatter movement to be successful were less likely to participate in the social movement.

Chapter Conclusions:

The above quantitative findings point to some significant findings. First the experience of cognitive liberation among the college students in this sample indicates that they are more likely to participate in social movements. This confirms my first hypothesis and is directly supported by the literature. Second, cognitive liberation affects participation, but does not have a statistically significant relationship to the individual's perception of success. However, racial identity in regard to the perceived success of the #BlackLivesMatter movement is significant, thus supporting my second hypothesis. Finally, the analysis of the relationship between perceived success and participation, though not statistically significant, indicates potential support for my third hypothesis. This is further analyzed in the qualitative analysis section.

In addition to quantifiable results, the survey provided space for qualitative answers. These, along with the nine qualitative interviews, are analyzed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5: QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In order to protect the confidentiality of the participants, all subjects' names are replaced with pseudonyms. The pseudonyms and demographic information are represented in the following chart:

Fig. 5.1 Participant Information Table

<u>Pseudonym</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Demographic Information</u>
Amir	Senior	White male
Christina	Junior	White female
Elizabeth	Senior	White female
James	Senior	Self-identified “brown” male
John	Sophomore	Black male
Sabrina	Junior	Self-identified “brown” female
Stacey	Junior	Asian female
Stephen	Senior	White male
Stewart	Senior	Black male

Coding:

This analysis is the product of a multi-step coding process. I first color-coded all interview transcriptions, created a chart of corresponding pseudonyms, and put the transcripts in a single document. I then read through the transcriptions twice, keeping track of recurring trends and important patterns on a notepad. Once I had identified the major patterns, I combined or eliminated specific subheadings depending on their proximity to other categories. This process left me with a concise but extensive key. Then, using this key, I read through the interview transcriptions twice more in order to choose quotations that best fit my patterns. At the end of the process, I had a list of relevant quotations illustrative of the observed trends in the qualitative data. These observations guided the following qualitative analysis.

Culture of Lake Forest College:

As a product of discussing #BlackLivesMatter involvement on campus, participants spent time discussing the campus culture of Lake Forest College. It is important to start with this conversation, as it provides context for the following qualitative data.

One interview question targeted the degree to which the individual was satisfied with the campus's reaction to the #BlackLivesMatter movement; this generally led to a discussion of the campus as a whole. One of Christina's comments targeted the campus's response to #BlackLivesMatter as well as the generalized response to social conflict: "In terms of BLM, I was satisfied with the response. I don't think it was a typical response from our campus. With normal responses to issues, I'd say I'm dissatisfied." This demonstrates the participant's perception of the College's current lack of activism and student participation; in Lake Forest College's past four years, the sit-in was the only demonstration of social unrest or support for a social movement or social change. The idea is reflected in a comment made by James, "In terms of administration, I think they're doing as much as can be done, as trying to be civilized because you can't really be brutally honest about the fact that your student body is fucked up and racist." James's comment implies that the perceived prejudice of the student body contributes directly to the lack of action.

Christina hypothesized why the #BlackLivesMatter movement may have catalyzed such a provocative response: "I think it directly affected a section of our campus that's already organized and knows each other well ... There might be lots of people who care a lot about women's issues, or vegetarianism, or whatever, but I don't think they're as consolidated and coordinated with each other." Her comment indicates a

perception of the campus's social organization; as discussed by Christina in her interview, "black students still sit separate from other students, and I've taken classes here where I was the only white student in an all-black class." The proximity of experience brought to students of color by the #BlackLivesMatter movement likely served as a rallying point, thus aiding in their mobilization. Similarly, John argued that the non-political nature of the campus led to his satisfaction with the sit-in and accompanying panels/speakers, but that the #BlackLivesMatter movement will never gain traction at the College because of a lack of interest. Despite initial criticism of the #BlackLivesMatter sit-in, Stephen and other participants spoke of their satisfaction with the campus's reaction to #BlackLivesMatter. Stephen commented, "Yes [I was satisfied because] it pissed a lot of people off ... just based on the explosion of racism that precipitated, I think that it rattled some cages that needed to be rattled."

Overall, interview participants were satisfied with the #BlackLivesMatter demonstration, but are generally unsatisfied with the campus's typical response to social issues and movements.

Making an impact on campus – unpacking cognitive liberation:

Following a broad discussion of campus culture, participants were asked to discuss whether or not they believed they could make an impact on the Lake Forest College campus. This section directly targeted collective liberation. Most participants agreed that it is possible due to the size and accessibility of the school. Christina spoke from experience; last year, she was able to bring about awareness regarding sexual assault issues by working with the Title IX coordinator and Dean of Students: "As an individual I took that on, and it was only the three of us, and I was the only student, so I

was able to see that direct change, but I also think it came out of a very situational thing.” The ‘situational thing’ noted by Christina is her level of involvement with the school, as well as her reputation; “I guess I have enough experience, where they knew I would be a problem if they didn’t do what I wanted.” Amir and John said that they believed they could make a change on campus, and Stewart agreed because “everything is so accessible here” and that it can be done with “the correct time and resources.” This leads me to believe that these interview participants are cognitively liberated; they are able to identify issues on campus and believe that they as individuals can make some kind of impact.

However, one interview participant expressed doubt in his ability to make an impact on the College. Stephen discussed a power structure that limits students’ capabilities: “The people whose decisions have the largest outside influence on the everyday ... operations of this school are unelected, unaccountable rich people ... we need leverage. And so, otherwise you don’t get any traction.” Stephen believes that change is possible, but that it will not be substantial or long-lasting because of the governing body. He agreed that change is possible, but it is beyond his grasp. Therefore, eight out of the nine interview participants were cognitively liberated.

Despite the participants’ perception that they can change specific things about Lake Forest College, many questioned their right to do so in terms of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. Many of these caveats addressed the identity of the participants. Though they agreed it was important and have participated in #BlackLivesMatter events, Christina, Amir, and Elizabeth articulated their inability to comprehend fully the impact of the movement because its actions and wants to not directly apply to their self-reported identities. These conversations revolved generally around the participant’s whiteness and inability to identify with the black community the

movement seeks to help. Christina stated clearly the difference between her perception of the movement's importance and her inability to participate fully: "I guess that in terms of my privilege, in terms of BLM, because I *am* a blonde woman, so I don't know if my voice really matters, but just support matters." Amir agreed, saying that he identifies with #BlackLivesMatter, "as much as a white man can identify with a movement like that, which is to say in a limited capacity ... I can sympathize with it, but I can't empathize because it's not my lived experience." The inability to take charge of a movement because it doesn't necessarily reflect the grievances of the individual illustrates one's ability to 'claim' an issue as their own. Rather than questioning the ability to change the trajectory of the Lake Forest College #BlackLivesMatter movement, these participants questioned their right. Elizabeth provided a helpful comparison:

[I can get behind the movement] in the same way that I think men can get behind the feminist movement. Like, you can be pro-feminist and support it, but it's not theirs. I think it's something I have to try to understand and see what I can do without taking away from its core.

Elizabeth's statement emphasizes the importance of preserving the integrity of a movement's identity. The idea of "taking away from its core" is important; #BlackLivesMatter is about black rights, so the movement should have a black voice and leader.

Conceptualizing importance of the #BlackLivesMatter movement:

Interviewees unanimously agreed on the importance of the #BlackLivesMatter movement and articulated multiple reasons for the movement's success. James expressed initial concern regarding the movement's lofty nature: "I was suspicious of this and thought it would only be a momentary reaction. I didn't expect it to turn into a substantial

movement that was rooted in physical activism.” John said, “I personally believe in anything that empowers people of color, and also, especially, women of color because they have such a small voice within the community and all around the world.” Here he explicitly references the importance of giving voice to a marginalized group of people. Christina echoed his statement, responding, “I think this movement is important just for like, keeping these conversations fresh and reminding people that we can’t just be a ‘colorblind’ society.” The idea of shedding light on racial discrimination in order to provide a more equal future was more explicitly articulated by many participants. Stewart spoke of its importance “especially with the promise of tomorrow,” while Sabrina saw it as a gateway to discussing the rights and identities of other minorities; “I do [think BLM is important] because I think it sets the pathway for other minorities as well.” Stacey argued for the movement’s historical significance as a precedent for judging importance: “You know, I feel like it’s going to be one of those vocab words that’s going to be highlighted in a history text book down the line like Vietnam, or you know, just the people who are marching on about being neutral in WWII until we couldn’t.”

Interestingly, Stephen and James assessed the importance of the movement based on the backlash it has received. Stephen said that, in addition to #BlackLivesMatter being a movement he can get behind, that, “one of the ways you can judge its importance and significance or whatever is by the reaction to it. And I think that like... the reactionary response from people who bristle at it is worthy of some thought in determining its importance.” Similarly, James, a self-identified believer in radical racial realism – the idea that racism is a permanent feature of global and American societies – said that the movement is important insofar as it tackles the insurmountable topic of racism:

[It's important] Because it will never dissipate, the idea that you're even able to bring it into people's minds and confront them with the brutality of what's going on, and not just an explicit brutality, but even in the microcosms where the specific instances are problematic and yet nobody will realize it because people's heads aren't being chopped off.

Sabrina also addressed the movement's importance as standing in explicit opposition to racism: "It's important because #BlackLivesMatter has this idea and it's pushing for something that's already in the society that needs to be fixed rather than just being on the outskirts of it. It's very up front."

Though participants unanimously agreed on the movement's importance, a few provided criticism. Stewart questioned its effectiveness and relatively arbitrary portrayal in media, discussing the fact that he is unsure which media outlets to believe.

Additionally, Christina said she would, "prefer if the movement was focused on more police training and creating different environments for police officers instead of just villainizing them," a statement that targets the way in which the movement is framed.

Additionally, Stacey said, "I find it really hard to get behind because the message is so broad and vague" She continued to express frustration with its message: "It's very unclear to me what its goal is."

In addition to providing individual opinions regarding the #BlackLivesMatter movement in general, participants discussed their #BLM-related involvement at Lake Forest College. Of the 9 interviewees, 7 attended an on-campus event that was, in some way, in support of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. Answers were split in terms of the initial catalyst; half said they attended to show support, whereas the other half went for personal education.

Christina, on her choice to participate in the sit-in, said "I went to the sit-in because I thought it was important. I also just wanted to support our school being more

active.” Similarly, Elizabeth, who attended the sit-in and one panel, said that she went to support both the school and students of color. The point is succinctly articulated by Sabrina, who responded: “I was really down for the cause, but at the time I went because I really wanted to show my support.” This quotation points to the importance of believing in the movement’s importance as well as demonstrating support for fellow students. The idea of showing support for both students of color and the campus as a whole remains important insofar as these participants were interested in helping their peers, but excited for the chance to be a part of a unique happening on the Lake Forest College campus.

In addition to wanting to show support for the campus, students attended events to better educate themselves on a social issue. John said that he “just wanted to educate [himself],” an idea echoed by Stacey: “It’s something that I’m interested in and would like to support because I think it’s important to be informed about a movement like that, and I care about racial equality, but it’s a very complex subject.” James said that he wanted to be part of the on-campus dialogue regarding racism and race-related issues; he said that he attended the panels, “because racism was surfacing on this campus. I mean it’s there, it lays dormant, it’s like a toxin oozing off. But when it comes out, it does so mercilessly, and it puts on a mask.” This quotation points to the importance of showing support for a racial minority, but also gaining knowledge and using that knowledge to combat the apparent racism on the Lake Forest College campus. As a whole, interviewees participated in #BlackLivesMatter movements on campus because of a perceived need to support and educate.

The two non-attendees that chose to avoid the #BlackLiveMatter events did so for radically different reasons. Stewart believes that racism and discrimination aren’t necessarily an issue for Lake Forest College because of its size and liberal arts

designation: “I don’t think it’s as pressing an issue on campus ... I mean, we’re a really diverse, small liberal arts campus ... I think we’re too small to not respect one another.” Stewart does not perceive a racial problem on campus, but his comment remains important because it demonstrates the decreased likelihood of students participating in a movement that they don’t see as necessary to the specific environment. Though Stewart believes in the importance of #BlackLivesMatter, he does not consider it to be relevant to the Lake Forest College campus. In contrast, Stephen was aware of the events, but questioned their power and potential: “I kind of knew they were happening, but ... to be honest with you, I felt that they would probably be full of lots of the same sorts of people that I’m talking about.” The individuals in question are so-called “social justice warriors,” or individuals who invest very little time and effort in causes, yet purport themselves to be activists. Stephen also described the sit-in as a “white guilt fest,” and said “it felt to me like a coexist sticker.” Though his comments may be cutting, they bring up a crucial opinion of Lake Forest College’s culture and the ability for students to make change; Stephen did not see a genuine passion behind white participation in these events, and did not want to involve himself in something he believed to be a performance. Though both Stewart and Stephen did not attend the #BlackLivesMatter events, their reasons for refraining dealt specifically with how they personally see and define the college campus.

Conceptualizing success:

The qualitative data gathered in the aforementioned survey aids in my understanding of success. When responding to the vignettes, individuals reported a lack of successful activism because of a lack of lasting change. In regard to the first vignette’s

lack of success, one individual wrote: “temporary attention does not equal permanent change – long term change is guaranteed only through the federal government.”

Similarly, another respondent wrote: “Even though the event received attention, the problem did not get resolved.” Regarding the second scenario’s lack of success, one student wrote, “The goal was to raise awareness. Laws were passed but awareness wasn’t really raised.” This explanation places emphasis on the goal articulated by the social movement organization: the intent to increase awareness of the issue. In sum, those who believed the scenarios were not examples of successful activism paid most attention to the perceived lack of a lasting impact (scenario 1) and the inability for the movement/organization to achieve the pre-defined goal of raising awareness (scenario 2). Though this was a small sample, their responses point to the ways people may rationalize definitions of success.

This finding is also supported by the individuals to report that both vignettes were examples of successful social change. For the first vignette, the most illustrative explanations of this position were: “They raised awareness which was their intent,” “It caught people’s eye and brought their concerns to the surface and may have changed others’ opinions even without changed laws,” “They got attention and their cause was covered leading to future hope,” and “If it increased discussion, that in itself makes it successful.” These participants seemed to care less about the immediate impact of social activism and more about the catalyzing of a discussion; it is less about instantly solving the problem, but about starting a conversation leading to future change. They argued that the actions, though minimal when compared to measurable legislative changes, are examples of success because they may lead to future change. This, like the respondents in the previous example, defines success in terms of a social movement’s ability to make

lasting change; even if the change is not immediate, survey participants argue that eventual change is important.

Participants arguing for the success of the second scenario did so because of the tangible legislative change. The most illustrative explanations provided by these individuals were: “Yes, the point of social activism should be to enact change, whether or not others are watching,” “When there is a change, if the problem is addressed, the protest is successful,” and “The protest still enacted change, which most organizers would consider their ultimate goal.” These individuals argued that, though the movement may not have explicitly addressed their articulated goal, they achieved the ultimate goal of creating change. The creation of a conversation and seeking of media attention is seen as a step to a more legitimate, measurable goal of legislative or social change. For these participants, it does not matter that the movement skipped the generation of conversation; they simply proceeded straight to the “ultimate” goal, which further supports the idea of social movement success as reaching goals.

Goals:

As previously examined, the survey data collected in the first phase of this project points to the importance of recognizing and fulfilling goals as a catalyst for positive perceptions of success and participation. This is in line with the previously-discussed literature, so I took the opportunity to interrogate the concept in my conversations with interview participants. The interviewees almost unanimously argued for the importance of goals and, interestingly, equated participation with success; this importance stems from the movement’s reputation and cost-benefit analysis. People seem more likely to join a movement if they judge it to be worth their time and effort, i.e. if it is perceived as

successful via the reaching of a goal. This idea is captured in a statement made by Christina, who said, “I think that protesting at its core is a very difficult thing, and I think people want to understand, like, ‘why am I going out and getting yelled at,’ or, ‘why am I putting my own safety in jeopardy,’ without understanding tangible goals.” Amir’s comment also addressed the degree to which not meeting goals can result in a negative perception of a movement. He addressed a particular speech delivered by President Barak Obama in the days before our discussion: “If for some reason they [the Obama administration] said their only goal was to create a bipartisan US, then they would have failed to live up to that goal, and to a certain extent, maybe people are still feeling that.” John provided another example of a cost-benefit choice: “I do believe that if a goal has been met that people will see it as more successful because they are making a difference ... They’re actually making a difference in our lives, so why don’t we support them.” This discussion is important insofar as it reveals the goals’ ability to frame the movement in a positive or negative light.

Though most interviewees agreed on the importance of setting goals, two brought up the nature of social movements and social activism as being fluid. Sabrina believes that individuals don’t really look at the initial goals of the movement because they change; “[It] doesn’t matter what they initially seek out to do, as long as they do something ... I think movements are fluid.” Stephen agreed, citing the fluidity implicit in collective action:

I would say that yes, successes have been achieved and there has been progress made, but it is because of the nature of collective action, it can be sort of... it can move ... it’s fluid. I would say that it provides the opportunity for people to work... for people within the movement to see where it’s going next.

For these participants, goals are important insofar as they are markers of success, but the nature of the goal is arbitrary.

In response to most participants' opinion that goals are important for determining success, I posed the question of the perceived lack of goals in the Occupy Wall Street movement. Most participants responded that the movement was successful. The sample referred to the idea that the 99% has been incorporated into the vernacular, and that this lasting impression is a sign of moderate success. Amir pointed to the idea that Occupy could be a reason for Presidential Candidate Bernie Sanders' popularity. Though no legislative change came as a direct result of the movement, most participants agreed that the introduction of a conversation was enough. However, the lack of legislative change provided a problem for Stewart; he said that he judges success on legislative change, and that, because Occupy was more of a statement than a pointed social movement, he cannot view it as successful.

Tangible outcomes:

Following the discussion of goals, I introduced the case of the University of Missouri. In the fall of 2015, students successfully mobilized and, as result, forced the university president to resign. I asked participants to speculate on the success of this movement. They unanimously agreed on the presence of success, though explanations differed; interviewees discussed the amount of publicity as well as the creation of an economic imperative. Both answers dealt specifically with external pressure.

The importance of publicity, according to the participants, generated a media burst that put pressure on the University of Missouri administration. James said that the criticism of the administration and support of students precipitated the success: "I think that Mizzou was able to do it because of the amount of support that came their way. That was amazing because it goes viral like that because people are interested and it spreads."

Elizabeth called attention to the school's size: "I think Mizzou is such a big and prominent school, and they saw [through media coverage] that something was actually done. Media might catch on and promote it more; if that makes the school look bad, then they usually have to do something." Both of these reasons describe external factors that put pressure on the administration to bend to the students' needs; the media spotlighted the school, and the pressure of national attention may have catalyzed action.

Additionally, Amir said that, without the awareness brought about by mainstream and social media, "he [the president] never would have had the pressure from his cabinet and I'm sure the other high-up members at Mizzou were saying, 'this is becoming a liability, you should probably just end this.'" The introduction of the idea of a liability is concomitant with the discussion of the imposed economic imperative created by the football team.

Six of the interview participants cited the importance of money as the reason for direct, immediate success; in identifying potential leverage, protestors forced the school administration to concede. Christina referred to the sustained nature of the protests as producing a "sense of urgency". Stewart, Elizabeth, Stacey, and James brought up the importance of the financial crisis facing the school if the football team remained on strike, but Stephen provided the most articulate description of the situation: "They hit the money ... They got the football team ... I think that is to me where these really important changes, you know, it's leverage. Even if they weren't going to go through with their threat, they couldn't even run the risk of them following through." The threat of withholding important resources, according to the interview participants, put the greatest pressure on the administration. Therefore, the interview participants cite the importance

of external factors as being the most streamlined route to a successful social movement, but that the withholding of resources provides the most direct and immediate change.

Importance of Success:

Participants offered a wide range of responses in regards to success's role in social movement participation. On the whole, interviewees believed they would consider the movement's success when deciding to take action. Many participants, such as Elizabeth, brought in the previously-mentioned cost-benefit analysis that takes time and effort into consideration: "I think for a lot of people, yeah, [success] is important, because you don't want to commit your time to something you believe is going to fail." Amir took a similarly pragmatist position: "I think it's important to me because ... thinking pragmatically, I don't necessarily want to put too much of my time and effort into something [that won't go anywhere]." The perception of success in a social movement remains important insofar as it provides evidence that the actions taken by potential participants will eventually lead to change.

Two of the nine participants said that success does not play an important role in their choice to join a particular movement. According to Christina, "Success doesn't matter that much. [What matters is] Fighting the good fight and knowing that you didn't sit on your hands while history passed you by when you could have done something." This statement also takes into consideration the social relevancy of specific causes and the effect of cognitive liberation on specific individuals. Similarly, John said, "I will join a cause because it's something that will help others and that won't jeopardize anyone else around them, and it can actually make a difference in the future." This statement

illustrates the ability for potential success, which is relatively confusing; John seems to be judging a movement's potential success rather than its ongoing action.

In addition to these responses regarding the importance of success, participants also mentioned an equally-important decision-making factor: value alignment. All 9 participants argued that, if the individual cannot support a movement and does not believe in the cause, success plays a very small role. This was true of participants who argued for the importance of success, as well as those who did not believe it to be important. This is reflected in the responses from Elizabeth, Stewart, and Amir: "I think if it's something you truly believe in, I don't think there's much inhibiting you from taking action"; "Whether or not it is successful, if you're passionate enough about it, you can delude yourself into think[ing] it's successful"; "If there's a higher chance of success, I would be more likely to join, as long as I'm for it." Their responses take into consideration the importance of success, but also the importance of value alignment. As summed up by Sabrina, "I think 100% that you will not participate in something you don't believe matters, especially if it doesn't involve you."

Success in the #BlackLivesMatter movement:

When prompted with a question asking to articulate the success of #BlackLivesMatter, all participants argued that it was in some ways successful. However, its conceptualization varied among individuals. Most participants discussed the idea of the movement raising issues and bringing systemic racism into the public sphere

Stewart was among these individuals; he said, "I think it leads to the point where it's shining a light on not just #BlackLivesMatter, it's also raising the issue of police violence, so I think it's effective in that sense." John spoke to its effectiveness in terms of

his own experience with the movement; as an international student, he was unaware of the systemic racism and police violence present in the United States. He said that, being foreign, he didn't know anything about it before matriculating at Lake Forest College. As a result of #BlackLivesMatter's mainstream and social media presence, he and his friends from home are able to engage in the conversation. Elizabeth echoed his sentiment, saying, "I think it's really important [and successful because] I think the biggest thing is that people are talking about it." Amir agreed, saying, "Yes, [it is successful] because the first thing I think my mind would go to would be awareness." Additionally, Christina said that she thinks it to be successful because increased awareness has brought about a degree of legislative change – in reference to some counties and states now requiring police body cameras. This introduces the idea of institutional change as opposed to cultural change. James spoke to the overall message of the movement: "To call out the fact that there is still racism in this country and even implicit forms of racism... That was successful." The idea of tackling such an impressively large issue as systemic racism and the #BlackLivesMatter movement's ability to introduce a conversation is, for many participants, a sign of success. All of these answers point to the importance of a lasting impact when conceptualizing success; in both cultural and institutional change, these participants focused specifically on outcomes that propel the movement forward.

However, Stacey disagreed with the others in regards to #BlackLivesMatter's success. She responded, "I would have to honestly say no, [it's not successful] ... when I think of the #BlackLivesMatter, I think of the people who are genuinely passionate about racial equality, and then I think of people who are just kind of pissed off that these people are in the streets ... It's very polarizing." Her comment speaks to the movement's dichotomous reach; though many people are now informed regarding the issues

#BlackLivesMatter addresses, Stacey argued that the media has a tendency to frame the movement as being destructive. However, Stephen's statement provides a counterargument:

I think that what they're trying to get at is proven over and over again by that response, and I think that the ubiquity of that response speaks to the necessity of this ... I guess it comes back to the clichéd idea that you can get a productive perspective and gauge a movement by ... the people who misunderstand it, and I think that could be something.

With this response, Stephen argues that a movement is successful when it brings about a response from those who do not agree with its message and aims; it both brings to light specific issues and solicits criticism. This criticism is a sign of success because it implies the power and influence a movement is able to have in/on the national conversation.

Chapter Conclusions:

Important conclusions to glean from this interview analysis include the reasons why individuals get involved in movements, the ability and right to lead change, and the relative importance of success. Based on the sample's responses, the most important impetus for participation is the presence of value alignment between the individual and the movement; all participants noted that, if a cause does not align with their personal values, success has almost no role in their choice to join a movement. However, once the individual recognizes value alignment, success is important when determining how much time and effort one is willing to invest in a cause. Additionally, though this sample is mostly cognitively liberated, white students questioned their right to lead or play a crucial role in the #BlackLivesMatter movement; though they believe in the cause and are willing to provide support, as indicated by their attendance of various on-campus #BlackLivesMatter events, the movement is not specifically for or about their lived

experience. Identity salience and personal relevance plays a crucial role insofar as it will either facilitate or hinder the degree to which one is involved in a social movement. Finally, I have narrowed the perceived definition of success; for this sample, it is a combination of goal-reaching and the achievement of long-term change.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Despite the small sample size and differences in sample makeup, all of my initial hypotheses were supported by both quantitative and qualitative data.

Cognitive Liberation and Participation:

Hypothesis 1: *Students who experience cognitive liberation are more likely to participate in social movement activities.*

The survey results indicated that those who experience cognitive liberation are more likely to participate in social movements and activism. A quarter of the subjects in my quantitative sample indicated a level of cognitive liberation, which proved to be a significant indicator of greater likelihood of their participation in #BlackLivesMatter. As demonstrated by the quantitative data, most participants indicated knowledge of a problem of police violence and a desire to somehow change the situation, but only 23.1% of respondents believed they had the ability to make any lasting impact. However, individuals who participated in the protest event were more likely to be cognitively liberated; though only 23.1% of the survey sample believed they could make change, nearly half of those attended an event or demonstration. This may be due to the importance of self-education and peer support as indicated in other survey responses, but the remains a significant relationship.

The qualitative data also supports this finding. Eight of the nine participants demonstrated their perceived ability to fix whichever aspect of society they deemed problematic in interview answers. All nine participants recognize societal problems and would like to change them. Most participants, citing school accessibility and resources, believe they can make change on the Lake Forest College campus, further crystallizing the presence of cognitive liberation. At least half of the participants attended the November 2014 sit-in, and seven attended a #BlackLivesMatter-related event. Therefore, the relationship between qualitative participants who demonstrated cognitive liberation (8) and those who attended a #BlackLivesMatter-related event (7) fully supports the hypothesis; those exhibiting cognitive liberation were more likely to participate in a demonstration or social movement-related event.

Cognitive Liberation, Identity, and Perceptions of Success:

Hypothesis 2: *The experience of cognitive liberation and/or identity affects the individual's perception of social movement success.*

As denoted by responses to both the survey and interview, the presence of cognitive liberation has relatively little to do with the individual's perception of success. However, identity is important to the perception of #BlackLivesMatter success insofar as it informs the degree that a potential participant is critical of the movement. The self-categorization of the "activist" identity was not statistically significant, but racial identity proved to be an important factor in perceiving success. As demonstrated by the quantitative data, Lake Forest College students of color – those with racial and ethnic minority identities – are more critical of the #BlackLivesMatter movement than their white peers. This finding was further evident in the qualitative interviews; though white

participants acknowledged their inability to be fully involved in the #BlackLivesMatter movement, they were, on the whole, convinced of its success. Of the interviewees who identified as people of color, only one agreed that the movement was successful.

However, his language points to a discrepancy; the individual used the word “effective” rather than “successful,” which is a distinction I failed to define. Students of color involved in the survey reported that, though the movement is successful insofar as it raises awareness, the long-term success was questioned.

The relationship between racial identity and perceptions of success is subject to various explanations. The first is that the #BlackLivesMatter movement calls attention to the rights of black individuals. Because the movement’s goals directly involve this racial demographic, students of color may have greater expectations in regards to movement results. Because of these perceived heightened expectations of Lake Forest College students of color, they are more likely to be critical of #BlackLivesMatter’s achievements. White students may not have high expectations for the movement, so any success – no matter how minimal – is seen as an accomplishment. Therefore, perceptions of success may be less influenced by cognitive liberation and more by expectations, which are established, in large part, by one’s identity. These expectations may also apply to cognitive liberation; those who experience cognitive liberation may have higher expectations of success because they believe change can be made, and therefore expect it to occur.

This remains the most interesting finding in this research, as it furthers the conversation of the ways individuals conceptualize social movement success. Gamson’s 1975 writing on success takes into consideration the acceptance of a movement by the antagonist and the distribution of advantages. However, his research focuses on

perceptions upon the termination of a movement; the idea that an individual analyses the success in the midst of a movement – and that analysis may be guided by their personal identity and the goals of the movement – an important finding for the purposes of this study.

Perceptions of Success and Participation:

Hypothesis 3: *The more an individual perceives #BlackLivesMatter to be successful, the more likely they are to participate in the social movement.*

Though not a unanimous response, 88.6% of survey-takers indicated that perceiving a movement as being successful would compel them to join a cause. Additionally, though the Fisher's Exact test of the relationship between success and action did not indicate statistical significance, the distribution is interesting; of the 20 individuals who participated, 18 said they would be more likely to join a social movement they perceive to be successful.

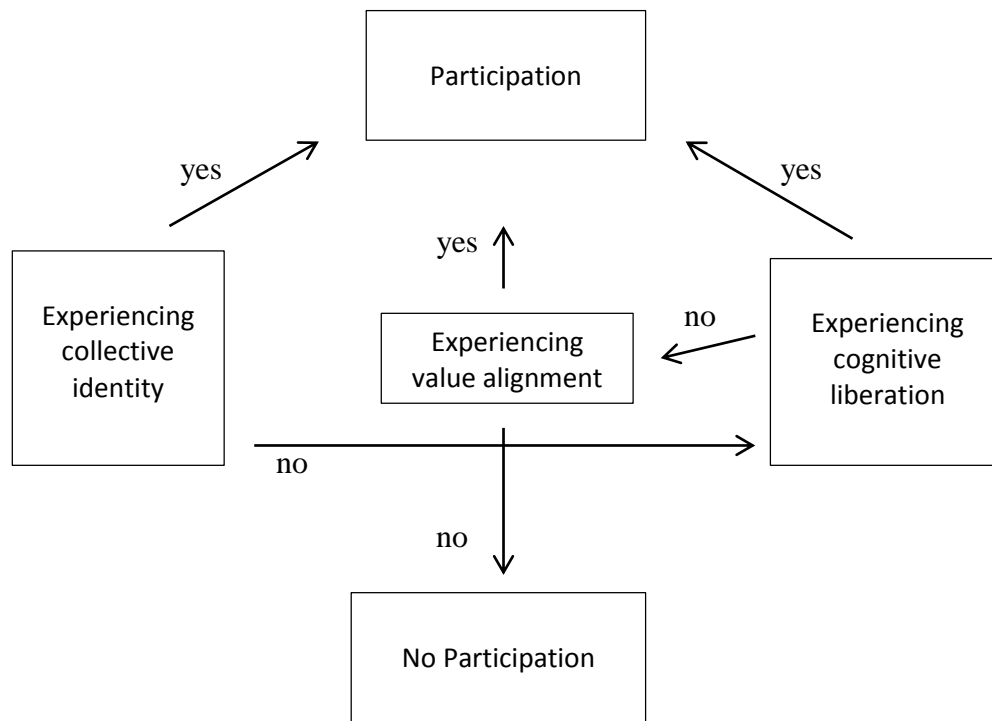
There are indications that the hypothesis is supported by qualitative data. Participants agreed that a movement's success is a motivating factor in taking action because it is pragmatic; nearly every participant said that joining a failing movement would be a waste of time, no matter how much they believed in the cause. Additionally, participants discussed their ability to convince others to join a social movement; even if they involved themselves in a failing movement, their ability to convince friends and family to support would be severely hindered. These qualitative results should be interpreted with caution; we must recognize that what people say they would do and what they actually do may be different. Verbal indications of intent to participate are not indications of actual participation.

However, nearly every interview participant mentioned something more important than success when joining a social movement: value alignment. Many argued that, no matter how successful they may perceive a movement to be, they would not join unless the cause aligns with their values. Though success is an important factor in choosing to join a social movement, value alignment remains more important. However, the importance of perceived success still stands as a motivating factor in a participant's decision to take action; the implied cost-benefit analysis of value alignment to perceived success is something to be developed in further research.

This finding contributes directly to the understanding of why social movements fail. My interviews determined that value alignment is the most important factor considered by potential participants. However, as supported by my quantitative data, not all individuals who believe in racial equality participate in the #BlackLivesMatter movement. Therefore, the judgement of success is important for social movement participation; if individuals determine that a specific movement or organization cannot benefit from their time and effort – if it has been perceived as unsuccessful – they will not join.

The relationship between cognitive liberation, collective identity, value alignment, success, and participation is represented in the following visual model:

Fig. 6.1 Process Model



Defining Success:

In addition to supporting most of my hypotheses, this research allowed me to analyze definitions of success as divorced from the completion of a movement. As supported by both quantitative and qualitative data, individuals perceive success in terms of lasting change and/or movement toward/the completion of stated goals. Interview participants agreed that setting and reaching goals is important when trying to frame or perceive a movement as successful, but in the discussion of Occupy Wall Street, they almost unanimously agreed that the movement demonstrated a degree of success because of the lasting impact on the national conversation; Occupy Wall Street did not have a specific goal and did not create any legislation, but the introduction of wage and wealth distribution into mainstream discussion remain salient – as indicated by the current presidential race and Democratic Socialist candidate Bernie Sanders. The nature of the

action, whether it is media attention or the passing of legislation, does not matter to this sample; as long as the change is lasting and/or accomplishes a goal, the individual will perceive it to be successful.

Conclusion:

Though this research includes various relevant findings, a few weaknesses must be explored. The first is the sample size; as previously stated, the size and nature (limited to mostly English majors, student musicians, and Sociology & Anthropology majors) of the sample may sway the results in a particular direction and limit tests of significance. Students of the humanities or social sciences may be more knowledgeable and opinionated about movements such as #BlackLivesMatter, and thus provide answers that support those beliefs. Similarly, the use of the #BlackLivesMatter movement may have informed my results, as it utilizes an identity-heavy frame; individuals may conceptualize success differently in movements such as the push for a higher minimum wage or an anti-war demonstration. Additionally, the differences between the quantitative and qualitative samples may have altered results. The qualitative participants represented a range of racial/ethnic diversity and – though there was a fairly even gender distribution – most interviewees were seniors. The quantitative participants were mostly white females in their junior year of college. If these samples had been more consistent, the results may have been different.

Though there are weaknesses in this study, the results remain relevant. I believe that the most important finding is the relationship between identity and perceptions of success; this finding hints at a greater understanding of what it means for a movement to be successful. Future research conducted on a larger scale may discover greater

complexities of this relationship – such as why specifically identity plays such a vital role in perceiving success, how it affects participation, and how deeply one must feel the identity in order to be affected, i.e. if identity transcends race and ethnicity and applies to environmentalists, feminists, &c.. Furthermore, future research should utilize the variables of this study, but as applied to a social movement that is not entirely grounded in identity; though the #BlackLivesMatter movement has successfully framed itself – through the use of frame bridging and frame amplification – in such a way as to attract non-black participants, it is a movement that targets the rights and privileges of a single racial identity. It would be interesting to conduct a similar study using the environmental movement or the minimum wage movement, as there is less emphasis on identity.

Future studies may also address the importance of success without using students. Students – as illustrated by Giguère and Lalonde (2010) – tend to experience a collective “student” identity, which may explain a portion of the #BlackLivesMatter participation on the Lake Forest College campus. However, the use of students – particularly undergraduate students – may have an impact beyond collective identity. As a population whose supposed primary role is to be educated, there is relatively little responsibility to maintain a job or family. As a result, this particular population may not have much interest in success as a mobilizing factor; they might not need to assess the importance of their contribution before joining as there is less at risk. Therefore, this study should be replicated with a sample of non-students in order to test the varying significance of perceived success.

I also suggest that further studies unpack what it means for a social movement to be successful. Gamson understands success as related to the end of a movement, but the positive relationship between success and participation leads me to believe in its

importance as divorced from a movement's completion. The characteristics I've isolated are relevant for the purpose of this study, but they do not provide a substantial definition. These studies may also address the importance of success in light of the post-industrial economy through the use of income as a variable. With the shift to neoliberalism and the advancement of capitalism, wealth may alter importance of success when generating participation cost-benefit analyses. Similar to the relationship between identity and success, this should be tested on a larger scale and with a movement partially removed from identity politics.

This research is important insofar as it introduces a conversation regarding the relationship between identity, success, and participation. In delving further into these links, one may develop mobilization methods based on the idea of success. The results of this research point to a potential explanation for the failure or non-emergence of a social movement. As illustrated, value alignment is an important impetus for action. However, as indicated by the quantitative data, those who ideologically support a cause do not always participate. The results of this study can therefore provide information for social movement organizations and participants; my findings point to the importance of identity-heavy frames as an impetus for action, as catering to a particular identity expedites involvement. Emphasizing identity in a social movement also blocks the importance of success; it should not matter if the potential participant does not believe a movement to be successful – as long as collective identity is stressed in the movement's framing process. In discovering explanations for a lack of participation, social movement scholars can continue to understand why social movements fail.

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APPENDIX A: Survey Tool

This research, directed by sociology student Cassandra Balzer, investigates the opinions of social activism in college students. You have been selected to participate because you are a Lake Forest College student of at least sophomore standing. There is no risk of harm or benefit to you. You must be at least 18 years old to participate. **Participation is completely VOLUNTARY and you may stop at any time. All responses remain CONFIDENTIAL.** Completion of this survey indicates that you have given your voluntary informed consent.

Current class standing:

- ☐ Sophomore
- ☐ Junior
- ☐ Senior
- ☐ Other: _____

Age: _____

RACE/ETHNICITY:

- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black
- ☐ Hispanic/Latino
- ☐ White
- ☐ Bi-/Multiracial
- ☐ Other: _____

Gender:

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other: _____

What is the most viable way to make social change? Please rank these options 1-7 (or 8 if you choose to fill in the 'other'), with 1 representing the most optimal vehicle for social change.

- [] Voting/Legislation
- [] Local participation/involvement
- [] Demonstrations/protests
- [] Social Media activism
- [] Petitions
- [] Letter-writing
- [] Calling a locally-elected official
- [] Other: _____

Distributed on separate surveys.

SCENARIO 1: In 1999, a Seattle activist group protested through rallies and marches. Their intent was to increase awareness of the issue at hand. It catalyzed an increase in media coverage. No laws were passed to address the problem.

SCENARIO 2: In 1999, a Seattle activist group protested through rallies and marches. Their intent was to increase awareness of the issue at hand. There was no increase in media coverage, but laws were passed to address the problem.

Is this an example of successful activism? **Y / N**

Explain your answer:

Which of the following movements would you define as “successful”? Please check all that apply.

	successful	not successful	unsure
Occupy Wall Street	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#BlackLivesMatter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anti-globalization movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gun rights movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arab Spring democracy movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Labor movement/Labor unions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Civil rights movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pro-life movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feminist/Women’s movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workers’ rights movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pick one of the options marked as ‘successful’ and explain your reasoning.
What constitutes successful activism? Please rank these options 1-5 (or 6 if you choose to fill in the ‘other’), with 1 representing the most successful.

- ☐ Mobilization (demonstrations, protests, marches, sit-ins &c)
- ☐ Media attention
- ☐ Passing of legislation/policy change
- ☐ Value change
- ☐ Increased awareness of issue
- ☐ Other: _____

Are you more or less likely to join a social movement organization if you believe it to be successful?

- ☐ Less likely
- ☐ More likely

In what forms of activism have you participated? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Voting
- ☐ Social movement organization involvement (membership, involvement, &c.)
- ☐ Protest/demonstration participation
- ☐ Social media involvement
- ☐ Signing a petition
- ☐ Letter-writing
- ☐ Calling an elected politician
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ None

PLEASE INDICATE HOW MUCH YOU DISAGREE OR AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING:

Rating:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The title “activist” is part of my identity.					
Others consider me to be an activist.					
I am a part of the #BlackLivesMatter social movement.					
I perceive myself to be similar to other members of the #BlackLivesMatter movement.					
Too often, police in the U.S. resort to violence when engaging black citizens.					
I want to change the system of police violence.					
I feel that I have the ability to change the system of police violence.					

Did you – on your own volition – participate in the sit-in that occurred on the LFC campus in December of 2014?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

Did you – on your own volition – attend any #BLACKLIVESMATTER events/panels/speakers?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

Did you participate in any #BLACKLIVESMATTER events or protests beyond the LFC campus?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

IF YOU ARE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN A SHORT, CONFIDENTIAL INTERVIEW, PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR EMAIL ON THE PROVIDED SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER.

APPENDIX B: Interview Protocol

PERSONAL HISTORY & DETAILS OF EXPERIENCE:

Tell me about a time where you were passionately involved or interested in a cause. What created the desire to get involved/informed?

Have you participated in any forms of collective action (voting, protesting, signing a petition, &c)? What was the cause? Why did you participate?

Describe your thoughts on the #BLM movement.

Is it a movement you can get behind? Why or why not?

Do you think it's successful? Why or why not?

Is it important?

How do you feel about their tactics?

Did you attend any of the on-campus #BLM events? If so, which ones? Why did/didn't you attend these?

Are you satisfied with the reactions of the LFC student body? What about the administration? What more/less should have happened? Why do you think the school reacted in such a way?

Do you feel as though you, as a student, have the power to make changes on campus? Would you have changed these #BLM reactions?

Are you aware of the Mizzou incident wherein student protestors forced the president to resign?

IF NO: Explain situation.

IF YES: What do you think those protestors did that made the result so overwhelmingly successful? Why do you think Ithaca followed suit?

Based on my survey data, it seems that people take into account the initial goals of the movement when choosing to participate. Do you think that meeting pre-defined goals, no matter how small, has anything to do with perceptions of success?

What about movements that don't have pre-defined goals, such as Occupy? How would you judge that kind of success?

DISCUSSION OF OTHER FACTORS LEADING TO SUCCESS

Do you know of any goals of the #BlackLivesMatter movement?

If participant brings up value/social change: Can we measure this kind of goal? Does it matter?

How has the movement met these goals?

What do you think constitutes a successful social movement?

Depending on answer: Do you think this success has anything to do with how the movement itself is perceived by the individual? If they are able to align themselves with the movement, believe that they (as an individual or in a group) can make a change, &c?

REFLECTIONS:

Do you think you as an individual can impact the #BlackLivesMatter movement? Could you do it on the Lake Forest College campus?

No – Then why did you participate?

Does that have anything to do with your decision to not participate?

Yes – In what way? Do you believe that *you* can make a difference?

How does this relate to your involvement (or lack thereof) in the #BLM movement on the Lake Forest College campus?

Is perceived success important to your deciding to participate in a social movement? If not, what takes precedence?

WHY? BASED ON PREVIOUS ANSWERS: If you are more likely to join, why haven't you?

Do you see yourself as an activist, do others see you as an activist, and do you want to be considered an activist? Is this something that is important to you?

DEPENDING ON ANSWER: If you identified more as an activist, do you think you'd be more likely to join social movements? Do you think you would see social change differently? Why?

WRAP-UP:

Do you think people (you as an individual? You as a(n) [insert demographic]?) are encouraged or discouraged from joining social movements? What factors do you think contribute to this idea?